United Nations A/66/903–S/2012/705

General Assembly
Security Council

Distr.: General
14 September 2012

Original: English

General Assembly
Sixty-sixth session
Agenda items 67 and 83

Security Council
Sixty-seventh year

Elimination of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance

The rule of law at the national and international levels

Letter dated 12 September 2012 from the Permanent Representative of Hungary to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Recalling the letter dated 31 August 2012 from the Permanent Representative of Armenia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General on the Armenian decision to suspend diplomatic ties with Hungary (A/66/896-S/2012/681), I have the honour to transmit herewith a letter from Janos Martonyi, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Hungary, addressed to Eduard Nalbandian, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Armenia (see annex).

The Government of Hungary would like to point out that the transfer of convicted felons to their national authorities for further imprisonment is a routine element of mutual legal assistance. Hungary's actions to proceed with the transfer of Ramil Safarov are in line with the letter and spirit of the 1983 Strasbourg Convention.

The suspension of diplomatic ties is particularly regrettable in cases where there is no unlawful action by the other country.

Based on the principle of settling international disputes through negotiations, and referring to the essential role diplomatic relations play in fostering the development of friendly relations among nations, Hungary stands ready to reinstate diplomatic relations with the Republic of Armenia as soon as possible.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and the annex thereto circulated as a document of the sixty-sixth session of the General Assembly, under agenda items 67 and 83, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Csaba **Kőrösi**
Permanent Representative

12-51060 (E) 180912

Please recycle

Annex to the letter dated 12 September 2012 from the Permanent Representative of Hungary to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Letter from Janos Martonyi, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Hungary, addressed to Eduard Nalbandian, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Armenia

Budapest, 6 September 2012

I have learned with regret that the Government of the Republic of Armenia has decided to suspend its diplomatic relations with Hungary. This decision has taken Hungarian public opinion by surprise, since our peoples are connected by traditionally friendly bonds going back centuries. My country has offered refuge to Armenians who wanted to settle down, and who often went on to become honoured and greatly respected members of the Hungarian nation.

In the past few years, the relations between Hungary and the Republic of Armenia have started to strengthen in a much welcome way. In November 2009, President Serzh Sargsyan paid a visit of historic significance to Budapest, during which our relations in the field of signing agreements were also widened. In May 2011, the Speaker of the Hungarian National Assembly visited Yerevan. We were also looking forward to the visit of the Speaker of the Armenian National Assembly planned for September this year.

The suspension of diplomatic relations is a grave decision, entailing incalculable consequences, which, I am convinced, does not serve the interests of the Republic of Armenia and the Armenian people. Hungary has always made efforts to maintain balanced relations with all the peoples of the Southern Caucasus, and has, according to her capabilities, contributed to the peaceful resolution of conflicts, by taking into consideration the interests of all the parties concerned, and to preserving the security of the region.

No country in the region is interested in the escalation of the tension in the Southern Caucasus. We support the Co-Chairs of the Minsk Group of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe in their efforts to find a framework for a negotiated settlement to the Nagorno-Karabakh issue on the basis of the "Madrid principles".

I would like to take this opportunity to underline in the most emphatic way: the extradition of Ramil Sahib Safarov, an Azeri citizen, to the Republic of Azerbaijan so that he could serve the remaining part of his life sentence is in conformity with the international legal norms in force today, and corresponds with the practice that Hungary generally adopts in similar cases. This is a bilateral, purely legal matter which was not directed against Armenia, and can in no way be regarded as an insult to the Armenian people. Hungary disapproves of the subsequent Azeri procedure, and has repeatedly voiced her disapproval.

I would like to assure you that Hungary continues to be interested in developing our relations. I am convinced that the best way to serve the prosperity of our countries would be if, on the basis of the Christian values that have established a bond between the Hungarian and Armenian people for a thousand years, we jointly tried to find a way that could lead us back to further strengthening the friendly relations between Hungary and the Republic of Armenia.

(*Signed*) Janos **Martonyi**